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p.v. asyl-284

P.O. angl. 284-1

B. Langb. I.

THE
BRITISH POETS.

V O L. I.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for A. KINCAID and W. CREECH,
and J. BALFOUR.

M, DCC, LXXIII.

THE
BRITISH POETS.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH.

Printed for A. KITCHARD and W. CHURCH.

and J. BALFOUR.

MDCCLXXII.

PARADISE LOST.

A

P O E M,

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T W E L V E B O O K S.

The A U T H O R

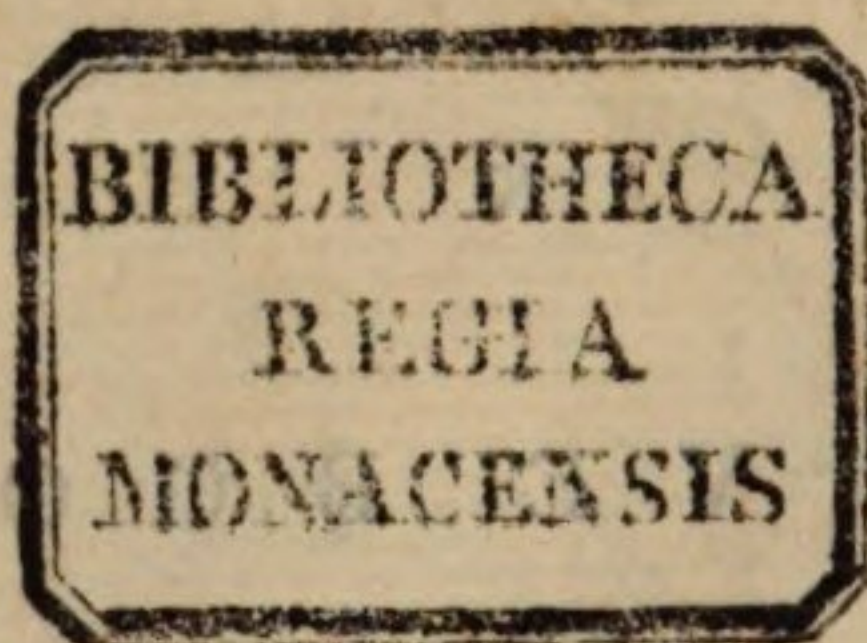
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The V E R S E.

TH E measure is English heroic verse without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin ; rime being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meter ; grac'd indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have express'd them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rime both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight ; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned Ancients both in poetry and all good oratory.

This neglect then of rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming.

The A R G U M E N T of Book I.

This first book propofes, firft in brief, the whole fubject, Man's difobedience, and the lofs thereupon of Paradife wherein he was plac'd: Then touches the prime caufe of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the ferpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his fide many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action paffed over, the poem haftens into the midft of things, prefenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, defcrib'd here, not in the center, (for Heaven and Earth may be fuppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accurs'd), but in a place of utter darknefs, fitlieft call'd Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-ftuck and astonish'd, after a certain fpace recovers, as from confufion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the fame manner confounded; they rife, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders nam'd, accor-

ding to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the deep: The infernal peers there sit in council.

PARADISE LOST.

B O O K I.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly thou, O Sp'rit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like satt'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument

I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell; say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal serpent; he it was whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel-angels; by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory' above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the almighty power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him. Round he throws his baleful eyes,

That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
 Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate :
 At once, as far as angels ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild ;
 A dungeon horrible on all sides round
 As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all ; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd :
 Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd
 For those rebellious, here their pris'on ordain'd
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
 As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.

O how unlike the place from whence they fell !
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns ; and wett'ring by his side
 One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
 Beelzebub. To whom th' arch-enemy,
 And thence in heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words,
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.
 If thou beest he ; but O how fallen ! how chang'd
 From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads though bright ! if he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the glorious interprise,
 Joind with me once, now misery hath join'd
 In equal ruin : Into what pit thou seest
 From what height fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder : And till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms ? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
 That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
 His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
 In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost ?
 All is not lost ; th' unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome ;
 That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire ; that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy' and shame beneath
 This downfall ; since by fate the strength of gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail ;
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
 We may with more successful hope resolve

To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain;
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O chief of many throned powers,
That led th' embattl'd Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I see, and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish: For the mind and sp'rit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory' extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqu'ror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours)
Have left us thus our sp'rit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;

What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd,
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: But of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.

But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of heav'n: Th' sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery furge, that from the precipice
Of heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,

There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his work
Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream:
Him haply flumb'ring on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell,
With fixed anchor in the skaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake: Nor ever thence
Had ris'n, or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heav'n
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and enrag'd might see

How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
 On man by him seduc'd ; but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames
 Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight ; till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire ;
 And such appear'd in hue as when the force
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuel'd intrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke : Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest'd feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
 Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
 As gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
 Not by the sufferance of supernal pow'r.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
 Said then the lost Arch-angel, this the seat
 That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light ? Be' it so, since he
 Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right : Farthest from him is best,
 Whom reas'on hath equal'd, force hath made supreme

Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,
 Where joy forever dwells : Hail horrors, hail
 Infernal world, and thou profoundest hell
 Receive thy new possessor ; one who brings
 A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater ? Here at least
 We shall be free ; th' Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence :
 Here we may reign secure ; and, in my choice,
 To reign is worth ambition, though in hell :
 Better to reign in hell, than serve in heav'n.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
 Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 Regain'd in heav'n, or what more lost in hell ?

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,

As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore ; his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, (not like those steps
On heaven's azure), and the torrid clime
Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
Of that enflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel-forms, who lay entranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd imbow'r ; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels : So thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,

Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of hell resounded. Princes, potentates,
 Warriors, the flow'r of heav'n, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can feize
 Eternal sp'rits; or have ye chos'n this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
 To slumber here, as in the vales of heav'n?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To' adore the conqueror? who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
 With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
 His swift pursuers from heav'n-gates discern
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
 Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad angels seen

Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
 'Twixt upper, nether, and furrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great commander; Godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities,
 And pow'rs that erst in heaven sat on thrones:
 Though of their names in heav'nly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
 By their rebellion from the books of life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 Got them new names; till wand'ring o'er the earth,
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their creator, and the invisible
 Glory of him that made them to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the heathen world.
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,

Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emp'ror's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who, from the pit of hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their childrens cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple' of God
On that approbrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley' of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell.
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon

And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flow'ry dale of Sibma, clad with vines,
 And Eleale, to th' Asphaltic pool.
 Peor his other name, when he entic'd
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
 Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide; lust hard by hate;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
 With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
 Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth; those male,
 These feminine. For spirits when they please
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure;
 Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what stape they chuse
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their airy purposes,
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
 Astarte, queen of heav'n, with crescent horns;
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon

Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs ;
 In Sion also not unfung, where stood
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day ;
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded : The love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat ;
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers :
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
 And downward fish : Yet had his temple high
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon,
 And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful feat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
 He also 'gainst the house of God was bold :
 A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
 Ahaz, his sottish conqu'ror whom he drew

God's altar to disparage, and displace
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appear'd
 A crew, who under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
 Fanatic Egypt, and her priests, to seek
 Their wand'ring gods disguis'd in brutish forms,
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
 Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
 The calf in Oreb; and their rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
 Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
 From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
 Belial came last, than whom a sp'rit more lewd
 Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself: To him no temple stood
 Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns athiest, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury and outrage: And when night
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door

Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might ;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than heav'n and earth,
Their boasted parents : Titan, Heav'n's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn ; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found ;
So Jove usurping reign'd : These first in Crete
And Ida known ; thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest heav'n ; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land ; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking ; but with looks
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to' have found their chief.
Not in despair, to' have found themselves not lost
In loss itself ; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue : But he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
His mighty standard : that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall ;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd.

Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
 Seraphic arms and trophies ; all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds :
 At which the universal host upsent
 A shout, that tore hell's concave, and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air
 With orient calours waving : With them rose
 A forest huge of spears ; and thronging helms
 Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array,
 Of depth immeasurable : Anon they move
 In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
 Of flutes, and soft recorders ; such as rais'd
 To height of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle ; and instead of rage,
 Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ;
 Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate or swage,
 With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
 Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil ; and now
 Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief
 Had to impose. He through the armed files
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse

The whole battalion views, their order due,
 Their visages and stature as of Gods ;
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories : For never since created man,
 Met such embodied force as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry
 Warr'd on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods ; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights ;
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebifond ;
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
 When Charlemain with all his peelage fell
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread commander : He, above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 Stood like a tow'r ; his form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
 Of glory' obscur'd : As when the sun new risen
 Looks through the horizontal misty air
 Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
 Above them all th' arch-angel : But his face

Deep scars of thunder had entrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge : Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain ;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt ; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd : As when heav'n's fire
Hath scath'd the forest-oaks, or mountain-pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak ; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers : Attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth : At last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O myriads of immortal sp'rits, O powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty ; and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter : But what pow'r of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse ?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile

Hath emptied heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend,
 Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat ?
 For me be witness all the host of heaven,
 If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
 Monarch in heaven, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom, and his regal state
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own ;
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provok'd ; our better part remains,
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not : That he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds ; whereof so rife
 There went a fame in heav'n, that he ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation, whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of heaven :
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere :
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial sp'rits in bondage, nor th' abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature : Peace is despair'd,
 For who can think submission ? War then, war
 Open or understood, must be resolv'd.

He spake : And to confirm his words, out-flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs

Of mighty Cherubim ; the sudden blaze
 Far round illumin'd hell : Highly they rag'd
 Against the High'st, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their founding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance tow'rd the vault of heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
 A numerous brigade hasten'd : As when bands
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickax arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on ;
 Mammon, the least erected sp'rit that fell
 From heav'n ; for e'en in heav'n his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than ought divine or holy else enjoy'd
 In vision beatific : By him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
 Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
 And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
 That riches grow in hell ; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
 And strength and art, are easily outdone

By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd,
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluic'd from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross :
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave ; nor did there want
 Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven ;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately height ; and strait the doors
 Opening their brazen folds discover wide
 Within her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
 And level pavement : From the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed

With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude
 Admiring enter'd; and the work some praise,
 And some the architect: His hand was known
 In heav'n by many a towred structure high,
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes; whom the supreme King
 Exalted to such pow'r, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard, or unador'd,
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell
 From heav'n, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
 On Lemnos th' Ægean isle: Thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now
 T' have built in heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent
 With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Mean while the winged heralds by command
 Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: Their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came

Attended : All access was throng'd, the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a cover'd field where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
 Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry
 To mortal combat, or career with lance)
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
 In clusters ; they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
 Their state-affairs. So thick the airy crowd
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd ; till the signal given,
 Behold a wonder ! they but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
 Beyond the Indian mount ; or fairy elves,
 Whose midnight-revels by a forest-side
 Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees ; while over-head the moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
 Wheels her pale course ; they on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear ;
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal sp'rits to smallest forms
 Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
 Though without number still amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,

And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

The end of the first book

The A R G U M E N T of Book II.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven : Some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created : Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search : Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to hell-gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and heaven ; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
 To that bad eminence; and from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with heav'n; and, by success untaught,
 His proud imaginations thus display'd.

Pow'rs and dominions, deities of heaven;
 For since no deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n,
 I give not heav'n for lost. From this descent
 Celestial virtues rising will appear
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
 Me, though just right and the fix'd laws of heaven,
 Did first create your leader; next, free choice;
 With what besides, in council or in fight,
 Hath been achiev'd of merit; yet this loss
 Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
 Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne

Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior : but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain ? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction : For none sure will claim in hell
Precedence ; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us ; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate : Who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd ; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in heav'n, now fiercer by despair :
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength ; and rather than be less,
Car'd not to be at all ; with that care lost
Went all his fear : Of God, or hell, or worse,
He reck'd not ; and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open war : Of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not : Them let those
Contrive who need ; or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait

The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay ? No, let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer ; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels ; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench,
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat : Descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low ? Th' ascent is easy then ;
Th' event is fear'd ; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction ; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd : What can be worse
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe ;

Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance ? More destroy'd than thus,
We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
What fear we then ? What doubt we to incense
His utmost ire ? which to the height enrag'd,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential ; happier far,
Than miserable to have eternal being :
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing ; and by proof we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne :
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On th' other side uprose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane ;
A fairer person lost not heav'n ; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd and high exploit :
But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels : For his thoughts were low ;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful : Yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O peers,

As not behind in hate ; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success :
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge ? The tow'rs of heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable ; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions ; or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light ; yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted ; and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair : We must exasperate
Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage
And that must end us ; that must be our cure,
To be no more. Sad cure ! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
'To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion ? And who knows,

Let this be good, whether our angry foe
 Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
 Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
 Belike through impotence, or unaware,
 To give his enemies their wish, and end
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
 To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
 Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
 Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
 What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What, when we fled a main, pursued, and struck
 With heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
 A refuge from those wounds: Or when we lay
 Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse!
 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
 Awak'd, should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or, from above,
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? what if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
 Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;

There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
 Ages of hopeless end ? this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades ; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view ? he from heav'n's height
 All these our motions vain sees, and derides ;
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heav'n
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here
 Chains and these torments ? better these than worse,
 By my advice ; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
 That so ordains : This was at first resolv'd,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear,
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy', or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqu'ror : This is now
 Our doom ; which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our supreme foe in time may much remit
 His anger ; and perhaps thus far remov'd,
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied
 With what is punish'd ; whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome
 Their noxious vapour ; or inur'd, not feel ;

Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
 In temper, and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light,
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change,
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
 For happy, though but ill; for ill, not worst,
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe.

Thus Belial with words cloth'd in reason's garb
 Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace: And after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the King of heaven
 We war, if war be best, or to regain
 Our own right lost: Him to unthroned we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
 The former vain to hope, argues as vain
 The latter: For what place can be for us
 Within heav'n's bound, unless heav'n's Lord supreme
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive
 Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his godhead sing
 Forc'd halleluiah's; while he lordly sits
 Our envied sov'reign, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers,
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
 Eternity so spent in worship paid

To whom we hate ! Let us not then pursue,
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd,
 Unacceptable, though in heav'n, our state
 Of splendid vassalage ; but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable, preferring
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of adverse,
 We can create ; and in what place so'er
 Thrive under ev'il, and work ease out of pain
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread ? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth heav'n's all-ruling Sire
 Chuse to reside, his glory unobscur'd,
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne ; from whence deep thunders roar
 Must'ring their rage, and heav'n resembles hell ?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please ? This desert soil
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold ;
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence ; and what can heav'n show more ?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements ; these piercing fires
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper ; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may

Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are, and where; dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark, by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: Such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: For such another field
They dreaded worse than hell: So much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to heav'n.
Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pill'ar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin: Sage he stood
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night,
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and imperial pow'rs, offspring of heaven,
Ethereal virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd

Princes of hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire; doubtless, while we dream,
 And know not that the King of heav'n hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne; but to remain
 In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
 His captive multitude: For he, be sure,
 In heighth or depth, still first and last will reign
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
 By our revolt; but over hell extend
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in heaven.
 What fit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsaf'd or fought; for what peace will be given
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
 But, to our pow'r, hostility and hate,
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the conqu'ror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep. What if we find

Some easier interprise? There is a place,
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven
 Err not), another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more
 Of him who rules above; so was his will
 Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
 That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mold
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
 And where their weakness, how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though heav'n be shut,
 And heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd,
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defence who hold it: Here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
 By sudden onset, either with hell-fire
 To waste his whole creation; or possess
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original, and faded bliss,
 Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth

Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires. Thus Beelzebub
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
 By Satan, and in part propos'd : For whence,
 But from the author of all ill, could spring
 So deep a malice, to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite
 The great Creator ? But their spite still serves
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
 Sparkled in all their eyes ; with full assent
 They vote : Whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
 Synod of gods, and, like to what you are,
 Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat ; perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neighb'ring arms
 And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter heav'n ; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell not unvisited of heav'n's fair light,
 Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
 Purge off this gloom ; the soft delicious air,
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
 Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
 In search of this new world ? whom shall we find
 Sufficient ? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
 The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
 Upborne with indefatigable wings

Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle ? What strength, what art can then
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries and stations thick
 Of angels watching round ? Here he had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage ; for on whom we send,
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat ; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt : But all sat mute,
 Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts ; and each
 In others count'nance read his own dismay,
 Astonish'd. None among the choice and prime
 Of those heav'n-warring champions could be found
 So hardy, as to proffer, or accept
 Alone the dreadful voyage ; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O progeny of heav'n, empyreal thrones,
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seiz'd us, though undismay'd : Long is the way
 And hard, that out of hell leads up to light ;
 Our prison strong ; this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round
 Ninefold ; and gates of burning adamant
 Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
 These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential night receives him next
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being

Threatens him, plung'd in that obortive gulf.
 If thence he scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape ?
 But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
 And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd
 With splendor, arm'd with pow'r, if aught propos'd
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do' I assume
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest
 High honour'd sits ? Go therefore, mighty powers,
 Terror of heav'n, though fall'n ; intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render hell
 More tolerable ; if there be cure or charm,
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion : Intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
 Deliv'rance for us all : This enterprise
 None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
 The monarch, and prevented all reply ;
 Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
 Others among the chief might offer now
 (Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd ;
 And so refus'd, might in opinion stand
 His rivals ; winning cheap the high repute,

Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
Forbidding ; and at once with him they rose ;
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow' rds him they bend
With awful reverence prone ; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in heaven :
Nor fail'd they to exprefs how much they prais'd,
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own : For neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue ; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory' excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief :
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heav'n's chearful face, the louring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower ;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening-beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men ! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace : And God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy :
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,

That day and night for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers :

'Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less

Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme,
And god-like imitated state ; him round

A globe of fiery Seraphim inclos'd,
With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms.

Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result ;

Tow'rd the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the founding alchemy,

By heralds voice explain'd; the hollow' abyfs
Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell

With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way

Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find

Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.

Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,

As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields ;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal

With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears

Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van

Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears

Till thickest legions close ; with feats of arms
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind ; hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' invenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Theſſalian pines ;
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboic ſea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapleſs fall
By doom of battle ; and complain that fate
Free virtue ſhould inthral to force or chance.
Their ſong was partial ; but the harmony
(What could it leſs when ſp'rits immortal ſing ?)
Suspended hell, and took with raviſhment
The thronging audience. In diſcourſe more ſweet,
(For eloquence the ſoul, ſong charms the ſenſe,)
Others apart ſat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reaſon'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge abſolute,
And found no end in wand'ring mazes loſt.
Of good and evil much they argu'd then,
Of happineſs and final miſery,
Paſſion and apathy, and glory' and ſhame,
Vain wiſdom all, and falſe philoſophy :
Yet, with a pleaſing forcery, could charm
Pain for a while, or anguiſh, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breaſt

With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams ;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep ;
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream ; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watry labyrinth ; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and be'ing forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile ; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damietta and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk : The parching air
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
'Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought ; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce ;
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice

Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time ; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink ;
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest : Through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death ; which God by curse
Created ev'il, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydra's, and Chimæra's dire.

Mean while the adversary' of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd's the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight ; Sometimes

He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left ;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd,
Hangs in the clouds by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs : They on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply stemming nightly tow'rd the pole. So seem'd
Far off the flying fiend : At last appear
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice three-fold the gates ; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantin rock
Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates, there sat
On either side a formidable shape ;
The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting : About her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal ; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore :
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance

With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
 If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either ; black it stood as night,
 Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart ; what seem'd his head,
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving, onward came as fast
 With horrid strides ; hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd,
 Admir'd, not fear'd ; God and his Son except,
 Created thing nought valu'd he, nor shunn'd ;
 And with disdainful look thus first began.

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates ? Through them I mean to pass,
 That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee :
 Retire, or taste thy folly', and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with sp'rits of heaven.

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd.
 Art thou that traitor-angel, art thou he,
 Who first broke peace in heav'n, and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
 Drew after him the third part of heav'n's sons
 Conjur'd against the high'st ; for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain ?
 And reckon'st thou thyself with sp'rits of heav'n,

Hell-doom'd, and breath'ft defiance here and scorn,
 Where I reign king ; and, to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord ? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings ;
 Left with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror sieze thee', and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold
 More dreadful and deform. On th' other side
 Incens'd with indignation Satan stood
 Unterrify'd ; and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levell'd his deadly aim ; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend ; and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds
 With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air :
 So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
 Grew darker at their frown ; so match'd they stood ;
 For never but once more was either like
 To meet so great a foe : And now great deeds
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky forcerefs that sat
 Fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
 Against thy only son ? What fury, O son,

Possesses thee, to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom;
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore, then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.

'T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate reply'd.
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung: Amazement seiz'd
All th' host of heav'n; back they recoil'd, afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign

Portentous held me ; but familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averſe, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thyſelf in me thy perfect image viewing,
 Becam'ſt enamour'd, and ſuch joy thou took'ſt
 With me in ſecret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burden. Mean while war aroſe,
 And fields were fought in heav'n ; wherein remain'd
 (For what could elſe ?) to our almighty foe
 Clear victory ; to our part loſs and rout,
 Through all the empyrean : Down they fell,
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
 Into this deep ; and in the general fall
 I alſo ; at which time this pow'rful key
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
 Theſe gates for ever ſhut, which none can paſs
 Without my opening. Penſive here I ſat
 Alone, but long I ſat not, till my womb
 Pregnant by thee, and now exceſſive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes.
 At laſt this odious offspring whom thou ſeeſt,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
 Diſtorted, all my nether ſhape thus grew
 Transform'd : But he my inbred enemy
 Forth iſſu'd, brandiſhing his fatal dart
 Made to deſtroy : I fled and cry'd out, Death !
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and ſigh'd
 From all her caves, and back refounded, Death !
 I fled ; but he purſu'd, (though more, it ſeems,
 Inflam'd with luſt than rage), and, ſwifter far,
 Me overtook his mother, all diſmay'd,

And in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingend'ring with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
 Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me; for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, thun
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.
 Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in heav'n, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
 Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of; know
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host

Of sp'rits, that in our just pretences arm'd
 Fell with us from on high : From them I go
 This uncouth errand sole ; and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created, vast and round ; a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of heav'n, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room ; though more remov'd,
 Lest heav'n furcharg'd with potent multitude
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
 Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
 To know ; and this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom air embalm'd
 With odors ; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine should be fill'd ; and bless'd his maw
 Destin'd to that good hour : No less rejoic'd
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.

The key of this infernal pit by due,
 And by command of heav'n's all-powerful King,
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
 These adamantine gates ; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
 Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
 But what owe I to his commands above

Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
 Inhabitant of heav'n, and heavenly born,
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrors and with clamours compass'd round,
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
 But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
 To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as befits
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
 And tow'rs the gate rolling her bestial train,
 Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
 Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers
 Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
 Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
 Unfastens: On a sudden open fly,
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
 Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host,
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth

Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear
 The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
 And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
 He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray
 By which he reigns: Next him high arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
 The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain
 His dark materials to create more worlds;
 Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd a while,
 Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd

With noises loud and ruinous, (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her batt'ring engines bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of heav'n were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the furling smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: All unawares,
Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: That fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land: Nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspiæ, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold: So eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way;
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confus'd,

Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: Thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power
Or spirit of the nethermost abyfs
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darknefs lies
Bord'ring on light; when strait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthron'd
Sat fable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The confort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next, and Chance,
And Tumult, and Confusion all embroil'd,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyfs,
Chaos and antient Night, I come no spy
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but by constraint
Wand'ring this darksome defart, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with heav'n; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound; direct my course:
Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof; if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darknefs and your sway,

(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night:

Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With falt'ring speech and visage incompos'd,
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against heav'n's King, though overthrown,
I saw, and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and heav'n-gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weak'ning the sceptre of old Night: First hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately heav'n and earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain,
To that side heav'n from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed;
Havock, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan stay'd not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity, and force renew'd,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse; and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset

And more indanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
 Through Bosporus, betwixt the justling rocks :
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
 Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour he;
 But he once pass'd, soon after, when man fell,
 Strange alteration ! Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
 Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
 From hell continu'd, reaching the utmost orb
 Of this frail world ; by which th' sp'rits perverse
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro,
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good Angels guard by special grace.
 But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
 A glimmering dawn : Here Nature first begins
 Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
 As from her outmost works a broken foe,
 With tumult less, and with less hostile din,
 That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
 And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn ;
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off th' empyreal heav'n, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,

With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd
 Of living saphir, once his native feat;
 And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
 This pendent world, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd, and in a curfed hour he hies.

The end of the second book.

The A R G U M E N T of Book III.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shews him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretels the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice. Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to godhead; and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: The father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth;

commands all the angels to adore him: they obey; and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity: What persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of heaven, describ'd ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: His passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man, whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of heav'n first-born,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee' unblam'd? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproach'd light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
 Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre,
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the heav'nly muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,
 Though hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain

To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath,
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: Nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyras, and blind Mæonides;
 And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had th' almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High thron'd above all heighth, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view :
About him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance ; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son. On earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blisful solitude. He then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there,
Coasting the wall of heav'n on this side night
In the dun air sublime ; and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament ;
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage
'Transports our adversary ? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyfs
Wide interrupt, can hold ; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way

Not far off heav'n, in the precincts of light,
 Directly tow'ards the new-created world,
 And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert : And shall pervert;
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience : So will fall,
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own ? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have : I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all th' ethereal powers
 And sp'rits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
 Not what they would ? what praise could they receive ?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,
 Not me ? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination over-rul'd
 Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree,
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I : If I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.

So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
 Both what they judge, and what they chuse; for so
 I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd
 By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none: In mercy and justice both,
 Through heav'n and earth, so shall my glory excel;
 But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
 All heav'n, and in the blessed sp'rits elect
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious; in him all his father shone
 Substantially express'd; and in his face
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
 Love without end, and without measure grace,
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
 Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace;
 For which both heav'n and earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Incompass'd shall resound thee ever blest'd.
 For should man finally be lost, should man
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,

Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
 With his own folly ? that be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right.
 Or shall the adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine ? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted ? or wilt thou thy self
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made ?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.
 O Son in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed :
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will ;
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsaf'd : Once more I will renew
 His laps'd pow'rs, though forfeit and inthrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires ;
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail
 His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.

Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,

Elect above the rest ; so is my will :
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites ; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide,
My umpire conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well us'd, they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste ;
But hard be hard'ned, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall ;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done ; man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of heaven,
Affecting godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He, with his whole posterity, must die,
Die he or justice must ; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heav'nly pow'rs, where shall we find such love ?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save ?

Dwells in all heaven charity so dear ?

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
And silence was in heav'n : On man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransome set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace ;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unfought ?
Happy for man, so coming : He her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost ;
Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring :
Behold me then ; me for him, life for life
I offer ; on me let thine anger fall ;
Account me man ; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee,
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleas'd ; on me let Death wreck all his rage ;
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd ; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ever ; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die ; yet, that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave

His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell ;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil ;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air, in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas'd, out of heaven shalt look down, and smile,
While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave :
Then with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter heav'n, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd,
And reconcilment ; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience : As a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
All heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring ; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O thou in heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath ! O thou
My sole complacence ! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created ; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,

By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.
 Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join ;
 And be thyself man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin feed,
 By wondrous birth : Be thou in Adam's room
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons ; thy merit
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd, and die,
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 So dearly to redeem, what hellish hate
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss,
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God,
 Found worthiest to be so by being good,
 Far more than great or high ; because in thee

Love hath abounded more than glory abounds ;
 'Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne ;
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
 Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
 Anointed universal king ; all power
 I give to thee ; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits ; under thee, as head supreme,
 Thrones, principedoms, pow'rs, dominions, I reduce :
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
 In heav'n or earth, or under earth in hell.
 When thou attended gloriously from heaven
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning arch-angels to proclaim
 Thy dread tribunal ; forthwith from all winds,
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages, to the general doom
 Shall hasten ; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
 Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
 Bad men and angels ; they arraign'd shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence ; hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
 And after all their tribulations long,
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
 Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
 For regal scepter then no more shall need,
 God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies ;
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
 The multitude of Angels, with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd
 Th' eternal regions: Lowly reverent,
 Tow'ards either throne they bow, and to the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns, inwove with amarant, and gold;
 Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
 To heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of blis through midst of heav'n
 Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
 With these, that never fade, the sp'rits elect
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams;
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
 Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
 Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
 Melodious part; such concord is in heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; thee author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible

Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitst
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear
Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang, of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold ; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample spirit rests.
He heav'n of heav'ns and all the pow'rs therein
By thee created ; and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring dominations : Thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy pow'rs with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man : Him through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline :
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd :
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,

Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die,
 For man's offence. O unexampled love,
 Love no where to be found less than divine!
 Hail Son of God, Saviour of men, thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.

Thus they in heav'n, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round world, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior orbs, inclos'd
 From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
 Starless expos'd, and ever threatening storms
 Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky;
 Save on that side which from the wall of heaven,
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air less vex'd with tempest loud.
 Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field.
 As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
 To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'ard the springs
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light :

So on this windy sea of land, the fiend
 Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
 Alone, for other creature in this place,
 Living or lifeless, to be found was none;
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 Up hither like aerial vapours flew
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or th' other life;
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
 All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 'Till final dissolution, wander here,
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants,
 'Translated faints, or middle spirits, hold
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
 Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
 First from the ancient world those giants came
 With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
 Others came single; he who to be deem'd
 A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,
 Empedocles; and he who to enjoy

Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus ; and many more too long,
Embryo's, and idiots, eremites, and friers
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven ;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd ;
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystallin sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd ;
And now Saint Peter at heav'n's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air ; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost,
And flutter'd into rags ; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds : All these upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd ;
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste
His travell'd steps : Far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heav'n, a structure high ;

At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold
 Embellish'd ; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth
 By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cry'd, 'This is the gate of heav'n.
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
 There always, but drawn up to heav'n sometimes
 Viewless ; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
 Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd
 Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss :
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
 Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,
 Over the promis'd land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,

To Beerfaba, where the holy land
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore ;
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean-wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
 That scal'd by steps of gold to heaven-gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last by break of chearful dawn
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
 With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams :
 Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
 The sp'rit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
 Round he surveys (and well might where he stood
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade) from eastern point
 Of Libra, to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond th' horizon ; then from pole to pole
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause
 Down right into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds ;
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,

Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
 Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
 He stay'd not to inquire : Above them all
 The golden sun, in splendor likest heaven,
 Allur'd his eye : thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,
 By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
 Or longitude), where the great luminary
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far ; they as they move
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute
 Days, months, and years, tow'ards his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part
 With gentle penetration, though unseen,
 Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to the deep ;
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
 Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone ;
 Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire :
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear ;
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,

That stone, or like to that which here below
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
 In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the devil met
 Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air,
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the sun:
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders sledge with wings
 Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the sp'rit impure, as now in hope
 To find who might direct his wand'ring flight

To Paradise, the happy feat of man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,
 Which else might work him danger or delay :
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd :
 Under a coronet his flowing hair
 In curls on either cheek play'd ; wings he wore
 Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold,
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard ; the angel bright,
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
 Admonish'd by his ear, and strait was known
 Th' archangel Uriel, one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
 That run through all the heav'ns, or down to th' earth
 Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land : Him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those sev'n sp'rits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
 The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest heav'n to bring,
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend ;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye,
 To visit oft this new creation round ;
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,

His chief delight and favour, him for whom
 All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd,
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
 Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man
 His fixed seat, or fixed-seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze
 Or open admiration him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
 That both in him and all things, as is meet,
 The universal Maker we may praise;
 Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel-foes
 To deepest hell, and, to repair that loss,
 Created this new happy race of men
 To serve him better: Wise are all his ways.

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,
 By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth:
 And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
 The sharpest-sighted sp'rit of all in heaven;
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
 In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify

'The great work-master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 'The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
 'To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
 Contented with report, hear only in heaven:
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
 Had in remembrance always with delight;
 But what created mind can comprehend
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite
 'That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,
 This world's material mold, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
 Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
 'Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 'The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
 And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 'That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course;
 'The rest in circuit walls this universe.
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side,
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
 'That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
 His day, which else, as th' other hemisphere,
 Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
 (So call that opposite fair star) her aid

Timely interposes, and her monthly round
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid heav'n,
 With borrow'd light her countenance triform
 Hence fills, and empties, to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower;
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.

Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
 As to superior sp'rits is wont in heaven,
 Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
 Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
 Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel;
 Nor stay'd, till on Niphates top he lights.

The end of the third book.

The A R G U M E N T of Book IV.

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprize which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state; but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: Then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escap'd the deep, and pass'd at noon by his sphere

in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: Their bower describ'd; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

O For that warning voice, which he who saw
 The Apocalyps hear'd cry in heav'n aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
 "Woe to th' inhabitants on earth!" that now,
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
 The coming of their secret foe, and scap'd,
 Haply so scap'd his mortal snare: For now
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
 The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind,
 To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to hell:
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold,
 Far off, and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him; for within him hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly
 By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair

That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes towards heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call,
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride, and worse ambition, threw me down,
 Warring in heav'n against heav'n's matchless King.
 Ah wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I deind subjection, and thought one step higher
 Would set me high'st, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
 Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd;
 And understood not that a grateful mind

By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharg'd ; what burden then ?
 O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
 Me some inferior angel, I had stood
 Then happy ; no unbounded hope had rais'd
 Ambition. Yet why not ? some other power
 As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
 Drawn to his part ; but other pow'rs as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
 Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand ?
 Thou hadst : Whom hast thou then, or what to accuse,
 But heav'n's free love, dealt equally to all ?
 Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
 Nay curs'd be thou ; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
 Which way I fly is hell ; myself am hell ;
 And in the lowest deep, a lower deep
 Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
 O then at last relent : Is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left ?
 None left but by submission ; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the sp'rits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises, and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,

Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of hell.
 With diadem and scepter high advanc'd,
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery : Such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent, and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state ; how soon
 Would heighth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feign'd submission swore ? ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep :
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse,
 And heavier fall : So should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher ; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace :
 All hope excluded thus, behold instead
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
 Farewel remorse : All good to me is lost ;
 Evil be thou my good ; by thee at least
 Divided empire with heav'n's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign ;
 As man ere long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair ;
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
 For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,

Each perturbation smoooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under faintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge :
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd ; whose eye pursu'd him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort : His gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness ; whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd ; and over head up grew
Insuperable heighth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene ; and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung :
Which to our general sight gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd :
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams,
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,

When God hath showr'd the earth ; so lovely seem'd
 That landskip : And of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
 All sadness but despair : Now gentle gales
 Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabeian odors from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the Blest'd ; with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
 Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles :
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend
 Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
 Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow ;
 But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
 As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
 One gate there only was, and that look'd east
 On th' other side : Which when th' arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd, and, in contempt,
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,

Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
 In huddled cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
 Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
 The middle tree, and highest there that grew,
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life,
 'Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
 To all delight of human sense expos'd,
 In narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea more,
 A heav'n on earth: For blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar: In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd;

Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
 Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill,
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown
 That mountain as his garden-mold high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst updrawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood
 Which from his darksome passage now appears;
 And now divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account;
 But rather to tell how, if art could tell
 How far from that saphir fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendant shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
 Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
 In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
 Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning-sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
 Imbrown'd the noontide-bow'rs. Thus was this place
 A happy rural seat of various view;

Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm ;
 Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind,
 Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste :
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
 Or palmy hillock ; or the flow'ry lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
 Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose :
 Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant : Mean while murm'ring waters fall
 Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her cristall mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their quire apply ; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove,
 Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye ;

Nor where Abassin kings there issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
'True Paradise under the Ethiop line
By Nilus head, inclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden; where the fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all:
And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd),
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he, and valour form'd;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd
Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waste
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.

Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd ;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have you troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence !
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel ; for they thought no ill :
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met ;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain-side
They sat them down ; and after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat reclin'd
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers :
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream ;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den ;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw

Dandled the kid; bears, tygers, ounces, pards,
 Gambol'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant,
 To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
 To th' ocean-isles, and in th' ascending scale
 Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose:
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
 Into our room of blifs thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mold, earth-born perhaps,
 Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
 Ah gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
 Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd
 Long to continue, and this high feat your heav'n
 Ill fenc'd for heav'n to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek.

And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth : My dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense ; yet such
Accept your Maker's work ; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give : Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings ; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring ; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end,
Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn,
By word or action mark'd : About them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare ;
Then as a tyger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,

Grip'd in each paw : When Adam first of men
To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all ; needs must the power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good

As liberal and free as infinite;
That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand

Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need ; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep

This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree

Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life ;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt ; for well thou know'st

God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of pow'r and rule

Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard

One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights :

But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs ;

Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom
 And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
 Like comfort to thyself canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
 Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
 Of waters issu'd from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd
 Pure as th' expanse of heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite
 A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me: I started back,
 It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
 Of sympathy and love: There I had fix'd
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me, What thou seest,
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes: But follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he

Whose image thou art ; him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human race. What could I do,
 But follow strait, invisibly thus led ?
 Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a platan ; yet methought less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth watry image : Back I turn'd ;
 Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return fair, Eve,
 Whom fly'st thou ? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone ; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side
 Henceforth an individual solace dear ;
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half. With that thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine : I yielded ; and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace,
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
 On our first father ; half her swelling breast
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid ; he in delight,
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
 That shed May flow'rs ; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure. Aside the devil turn'd
 For envy ; yet with jealous leer malign

Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting ! thus these two,
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,

The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill

Of blifs on blifs ; while I to hell am thrust,

Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,

Among our other torments not the least,

Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.

Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd

From their own mouths : All is not theirs it seems ;

One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,

Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden ?

Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord

Envy them that ? can it be sin to know ?

Can it be death ? and do they only stand

By ignorance ? is that their happy state,

The proof of their obedience, and their faith ?

O fair foundation laid whereon to build

Their ruin ! Hence I will excite their minds

With more desire to know, and to reject

Envious commands, invented with design

To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt

Equal with gods : Aspiring to be such,

They taste, and die : What likelier can ensue ?

But first with narrow search I must walk round

This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd ;

A chance but chance may lead where I may meet

Some wand'ring sp'rit of heav'n, by fountain-side,

Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw

What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,

Yet happy pair ! enjoy, till I return,

Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began [roam.
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his
 Mean while in utmost longitude, where heaven
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Levell'd his evening rays : It was a rock
 Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high ;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night ;
 About him exercis'd heroic games
 Th' unarmed youth of heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
 On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
 Impress'd the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds : He thus began in haste.

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in.
 This day at heighth of noon came to my sphere
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
 More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
 God's latest image : I describ'd his way

Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait ;
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
 Alien from heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd :
 Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him : One of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
 New troubles ; him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst,
 See far and wide : In at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
 Well known from heav'n ; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence : If sp'rit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthly bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he ; and Uriel to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
 Before him slope downward to the sun now fall'n
 Beneath th' Azores ; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
 Diurnal, or this less volubile earth,
 By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad ;

Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird,
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were flunk ; all but the wakeful nightingale ;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung ;
 Silence was pleas'd : Now glow'd the firmament
 With living saphirs : Hesperus, that led
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair comfort, th' hour
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
 Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
 Successive ; and the timely dew of sleep
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
 Our eyelids : Other creatures all day long
 Rove idle unemploy'd, and less need rest ;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity.
 And the regard of heav'n on all his ways ;
 While other animals unactive range,
 And of their doings God takes no account.
 To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our present labour, to reform
 Yon flow'ry arbours, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth :
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
 That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,

Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease :
 Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
 My author and disposer, what thou bid'st
 Unargu'd I obey ; so God ordains ;
 God is thy law, thou mine : To know no more
 Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
 With thee conversing I forget all time ;
 All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
 With charm of earliest birds ; pleasant the sun,
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 Glist'ring with dew ; fragrant the fertile earth
 After soft show'rs ; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild ; then silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train :
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
 With charm of earliest birds ; nor rising sun
 On this delightful land ; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glist'ring with dew ; nor fragrance after show'rs ;
 Nor grateful evening mild ; nor silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
 Or glitt'ring star-light, without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these ? for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes ?

To whom our general ancestor reply'd.
 Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve !
 These have their course to finish round the earth,
 By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,

Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise ;
 Lest total darkness should by night regain
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In nature and all things ; which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
 These then, though unbeheld by deep of night,
 Shine not in vain ; nor think, though men were none,
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise :
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep :
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night : How often, from the steep
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight-air,
 Sole, or responsive each to others note,
 Singing their great Creator ? oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
 With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heav'n.

Thus talking hand in hand alone they pass'd
 On to their blissful bow'r : It was a place
 Chos'n by the sov'reign Planter, when he fram'd
 All things to man's delightful use ; the roof
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf ; on either side

Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall ; each beauteous flower,
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
 Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic ; underfoot the violet,
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
 Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
 Of costliest emblem : Other creature here,
 Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none ;
 Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower
 More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph,
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs
 Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed,
 And heav'nly quires the hymenæan sung,
 What day the genial angel to our fire
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
 Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like
 In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
 Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry pole : Thou also mad'st the night,
 Maker omnipotent, and thou the day,
 Which we in our appointed work employ'd
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,

And mutual love, the crown of all our blifs
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place,
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Strait side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bides increase; Who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men,
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,

Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
 Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels ; not in the bought smile
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
 Casual fruition ; nor in court-amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight-ball,
 Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept ;
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Show'r'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on
 Bless'd pair ; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
 To their night-watches in warlike parade ;
 When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch ; these other wheel the north ;
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
 From these, two strong and subtle sp'rits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.

Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook ;
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.

This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
 The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt :
 Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazling the moon; these to the bow'r direct,
 In search of whom they fought: Him there they found
 Squat like a toad close at the ear of Eve,
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 Blown up with high conceits ingend'ring pride.
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
 Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: Up he starts
 Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
 Fit for the sun some magazine to store
 Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:
 So started up in his own shape the fiend.
 Back stept these two fair angels, half amaz'd
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.
 Which of these rebel sp'rits adjudg'd to hell

Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison ? and transform'd
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep ?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
 Know ye not me ? ye knew me once no mate
 For you, there sitting where you durst not soar :
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
 The lowest of your throng ; or if ye know,
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
 Your message, like to end as much in vain ?

To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn.
 Think not, revolted sp'rit, thy shape the same,
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
 As when thou stood'st in heav'n upright and pure ;
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee ; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherub ; and his grave rebuke,
 Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
 Invincible : Abash'd the devil stood,
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
 Virtue in her shape how lovely ; saw, and pin'd
 His loss ; but chiefly to find here observ'd
 His lustre visibly impair'd ; yet seem'd
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
 Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
 Or all at once ; more glory will be won,
 Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
 Will save us trial what the least can do

Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on
Champing his iron curb: To strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief
Gabriel from the front thus call'd aloud.

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendor wan; who by his gate
And fierce demeanour seems the prince of hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.
Gabriel thou hadst in heav'n the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee: But this question ask'd

Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
 Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,
 And boldly venture to whatever place
 Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
 To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
 But evil hast not try'd: And wilt object
 His will who bound us? let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance: Thus much what was ask'd.
 The rest is true, they found me where they say;
 But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
 Disdainfully half smiling, thus reply'd.
 O loss of one in heav'n to judge of wise,
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
 And now returns him from his prison scap'd,
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
 Unlicenc'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain
 However, and to scape his punishment.
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
 Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they

Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief,
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alledg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting volied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
I therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practic'd distances to cringe, not fight.

To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd.
To say and strait unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!

Faithful to whom ? to thy rebellious crew ?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Pow'r supreme ?
 And thou, fly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
 Heav'n's awful Monarch ? wherefore, but in hope
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign ?
 But mark what I arreed thee now, Avaunt ;
 Fly thither whence thou fledst : If from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he ; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, reply'd.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
 Proud liminary Cherub, but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though heav'n's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
 In progress through the road of heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them ; the careful plowman doubting stands,

Left on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan alarm'd,
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd :
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plum'd ; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
 Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of heav'n perhaps, or all the elements,
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon
 Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms : In these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight ;
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam ;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine;
 Neither our own, but giv'n : What folly then
 To boast what arms can do ? since thine no more
 Than heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire : For proof look up,
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign, [weak,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how
 If thou resist. The fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft : Nor more ; but fled
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.

The end of the fourth book.

The A R G U M E N T of Book V.

Morning approach'd, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: They come forth to their day labours: Their morning-hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance describ'd, his coming discern'd by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the

parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a Seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

NOW morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
 When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
 Was airy light from pure digestion bred,
 And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough ; so much the more
 His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
 With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
 As through unquiet rest : He, on his side
 Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
 Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
 Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
 Shot forth peculiar graces ; then with voice
 Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
 Heav'n's last best gift, my ever-new delight,
 Awake ! The morning shines, and the fresh field
 Calls us ; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,

How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam; whom embracing, thus she spake.

O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face and morn return'd; for I this night
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: Methought
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: It said,
Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song? now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard: Heav'n wakes with all his eyes;
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd, through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: Fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heav'n

By us oft seen ; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia ; on that tree he also gaz'd ;
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit furcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man ? Is knowledge so despis'd ?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste ?
Forbid who will, none shall from me with-hold
Longer thy offer'd good ; why else set here ?
This said, he paus'd not, but with ventrous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted : Me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold.
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men :
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honour'd more ?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also ; happy though thou art,
Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be :
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth, of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd ; the pleasant savory smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld

The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
 And various : Wond'ring at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation ; suddenly
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep : But O how glad I wak'd,
 To find this but a dream ! Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half,
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally ; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear :
 Yet evil whence ? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know, that in the soul
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief : Among these Fancy next
 Her office holds ; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
 Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion ; then retires
 Into her private cell, when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
 To imitate her ; but misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
 But with addition strange ; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or man
 May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
 No spot or blame behind : Which gives me hope

That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream.
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more chearful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise,
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So chear'd he his fair spouse, and she was chear'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse,
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arbo'rous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up risen,
With wheels yet hov'ring o'er the ocean-brim
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landskip all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various stile; for neither various stile
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd, or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tuneable than needed lute or harp

To add more sweetness ; and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair ; thyself how wondrous then !
Unspeakable, who sitst above these heav'ns
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels ; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing ; ye in heav'n,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies ;
And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform ; and mix,
And nourish all things ; let your ceaseless change

Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
 Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honour to the world's great Author rise,
 Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.
 His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye pines,
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains, and ye, that warble as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices all ye living souls : Ye birds,
 That singing up to heaven-gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep ;
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still
 To give us only good ; and if the night
 Have gather'd aught of evil, or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm.
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,
 Among sweet dewes and flow'rs ; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces : Or they led the vine

To wed her elm ; she spous'd about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r, th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
 Raphael, the sociable sp'rit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
 His marriage with the sev'ntimes-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
 Satan from hell, scap'd through the darksome gulf,
 Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair, how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,
 To respite his day-labour with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his pow'r left free to will,
 Left to his own free will; his will though free,
 Yet mutable : Whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not too secure. Tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom ; what enemy,
 Late fall'n himself from heav'n, is plotting now
 The fall of others from like state of blifs :
 By violence ? no, for that shall be withstood ;
 But by deceit and lies : This let him know,
 Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice : Nor delay'd the winged saint

After his charge receiv'd; but from among
 Thousand celestial Ardors, where he stood
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
 Flew through the midst of heav'n; th' angelic quires,
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
 Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide,
 On golden hinges turning, as by work
 Divine the sov'reign Architect had fram'd.
 From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interpos'd, however small, he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass
 Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
 Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
 Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A Phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
 When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
 A Seraph wing'd: Six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast

With regal ornament ; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waste, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colours dipt in heav'n ; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch ; and to his state,
And to his message high in honour rise ;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound.
Their glitt'ring tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm ;
A wilderness of sweets ; for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art ; enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs ;
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
For dinner favoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape : To whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving ; seems another morn
Ris'n on mid-noon ; some great behest from heav'n

To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive
 Our heav'nly stranger : Well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestow'd, where nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mold,
 Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk ;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 'To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes :
 But I will haste and from each bough and break,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 'To entertain our angel-guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
 God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heav'n.

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
 'Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
 'Taste after taste upheld with kindest change ;
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore,
 In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where
 Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board

Heaps with unsparing hand ; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams ; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure ; then strows the ground
 With rose and odors from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great fire, to meet
 His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own compleat
 Perfections ; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
 Dazles the croud, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
 Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low,
 Thus said. Native of heav'n, for other place
 None can than heav'n such glorious shape contain ;
 Since by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline.

Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild.
 Adam, I therefore came ; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though sp'rits of heav'n,
 To visit thee : Lead on then where thy bower

O'er shades ; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
With flow'rets deck'd and fragrant smells ; but Eve
Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from heav'n ; no veil
She needed, virtue proof ; no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel Hail
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round ;
And on her ample square from side to side
All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
Danc'd hand and hand. A while discourse they hold ;
No fear lest dinner cool ; when thus began
Our author. Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
The earth to yield ; unfavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures ; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the angel. Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
Spiritual, may of purest sp'rits be found
No ingrateful food : And food alike those pure

Intelligent substances require,
 As doth your rational ; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created, needs
 To be sustain'd and fed : Of elements,
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and as lowest, first the moon ;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
 Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd.
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at ev'n
 Sups with the ocean. Though in heav'n the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar ; though from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain : Yet God hath here
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with heaven ; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell : Nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
 Of Theologians ; but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate : What redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease ; nor wonder ; if by fire

Of footy coal th' empiric alchemist
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve
 Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crown'd. O innocence
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell.

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
 Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
 Giv'n him by this great conference to know
 Of things above his world, and of their being
 Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
 Exceeded human, and his wary speech
 Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd.

Inhabitant with God, now know I well
 Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At heav'n's high feasts to have fed: Yet what compare?

To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd.
 O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return,
 If not deprav'd from good, created all

Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Endu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flow'r
Spirits odorous breathes: Flow'rs and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive: Discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Diff'ring but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance. Time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
And from these corporeal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy

Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon,
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the angel. Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend. That thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continu'st such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse?
Myself and all th' angelic host, that stand

In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds ;
 On other surety none : Freely we serve,
 Because we freely love, as in our will
 To love or not ; in this we stand or fall :
 And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
 And so from heav'n to deepest hell ; O fall
 From what high state of bliss into what woe !

To whom our great progenitor. Thy words
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills
 Aereal music send : Nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free ;
 Yet that we never shall forget to love
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assur'd me, and still assure : Though what thou tell'st
 Hath pass'd in heav'n, some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
 The full relation ; which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard :
 And we have yet large day ; for scarce the sun
 Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of heav'n.

Thus Adam made request ; and Raphael,
 After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'st me, O prime of men,
 Sad task and hard ; for how shall I relate
 To human sense th' invisible exploits
 Of warring spirits ? How without remorse
 The ruin of so many glorious once

And perfect while they stood ! how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal ! Yet for thy good
 This is dispens'd ; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
 As may express them best ; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow' of heav'n, and things therein
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought ?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heav'ns now roll, where earth now
 Upon her center pois'd ; when on a day, (rests
 (For time, though in eternity, apply'd
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future), on such day
 As heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne
 Forthwith from all the ends of heav'n appear'd
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright :
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees ;
 Or in their glitt'ring tissues bear emblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
 Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye angels, progeny of light,
 Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
 Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
 At my right hand ; your head I him appoint ;
 And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
 All knees in heav'n, and shall confess him Lord :
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United as one individual soul
 For ever happy : Him who disobey
 Me disobey, breaks union, and that day
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
 Ordain'd without redemption, without end.

So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seem'd well pleas'd ; all seem'd, but were not all.
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent
 In song and dance about the sacred hill ;
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
 Of planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
 Then most when most irregular they seem ;
 And in their motions harmony divine
 So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
 Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd,
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need),
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
 Desirous ; all in circles as they stood,

Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
 With angels food and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heav'n.
 On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'r'd
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest heav'n had chang'd
 To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there
 In darker veil), and roseate dews dispos'd
 All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
 (Such are the courts of God), th' angelic throng,
 Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those who, in their course,
 Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne
 Alternate all night long. But not so wak'd
 Satan; so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in heav'n; he of the first,
 If not the first Arch-angel, great in pow'r,
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd

Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour,
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipp'd, unobey'd, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eyelids? and remember'st what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips
Of heav'n's Almighty. 'Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels to debate
What doubtful may ensue: More in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our king,
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false Arch-angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast

Of his affociate: He together calls,
 Or feveral one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heav'n,
 The great hierarchal standard was to move;
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to found
 Or taint integrity: But all obey'd
 The wonted signal, and superior voice
 Of their great potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in heav'n;
 His count'nance, as the morning-star that guides
 The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host.

Mean while th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw, without their light,
 Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And smiling to his only Son thus said.

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire: Such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try

In battle, what our pow'r is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes
 Justly hast in derision, and secure
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal pow'r
 Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heav'n.

So spake the Son ; but Satan, with his pow'rs,
 Far was advanc'd on winged speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night,
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,
 In their triple degrees ; regions to which
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globe
 Stretch'd into longitude ; which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north
 They came ; and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and tow'rs
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold ;

The palace of great Lucifer, (so call
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted) which not long after, he
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declar'd in sight of heav'n,
 The mountain of the congregation call'd;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their King
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
 If these magnific titles yet remain
 Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself ingross'd
 All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult how we may best,
 With what may be devis'd of honours new,
 Receive him, coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
 Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
 To one and to his image now proclaim'd?
 But what if better counsels might erect
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
 Natives and sons of heav'n possess'd before
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,

Equally free ; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume
 Monarchy over such as live by right
 His equals, if in pow'r and splendor less,
 In freedom equal ? or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not ? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration to th' abuse
 Of those imperial titles, which assert
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse without control
 Had audience, when among the Seraphim
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
 The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
 The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud !
 Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n
 Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
 That to his only Son by right endu'd
 With regal scepter, every soul in heav'n
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
 Confess him rightful King ? Unjust, thou say'st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign,
 One over all with unsucceeded power.
 Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
 With him the points of liberty, who made

Thee what thou art, and form'd the pow'rs of heav'n
 Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being ?
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
 And of our good and of our dignity
 How provident he is; how far from thought
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state under one head more near
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,
 That equal over equals monarch reign :
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
 Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
 Equal to him begotten Son ? By whom,
 As by his Word, the mighty Father made
 All things, ev'n thee ; and all the sp'rits of heav'n
 By him created in their bright degrees,
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
 'Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
 Essential pow'rs ; nor by his reign obscur'd,
 But more illustrious made ; since he the head
 One of our number thus reduc'd becomes ;
 His laws our laws ; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these ; but hasten to appease
 Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel ; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd,
 Or singular and rash ; whereat rejoic'd
 Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.

That we were form'd then say'st thou ? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
 From Father to his Son ? Strange point, and new !

Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd : Who
 When this creation was ? remember'st thou [saw
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being ?
 We know no time when we were not as now ;
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
 By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native heav'n, ethereal sons.
 Our puissance is our own ; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
 Who is our equal : Then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne :
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings carry to th' anointed King ;
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight..

He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
 Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause
 Through the infinite host ; nor less for that
 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone
 Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold..

O alienate from God, O sp'rit accurs'd,
 Forsaken of all good ; I see thy fall
 Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
 Both of thy crime and punishment : Henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah ; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsaf'd ; other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recall ;
 That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,
 Is now an iron rod to bruise and break.

Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise ;
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not : For soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.

So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, untterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
Nor number nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought ;
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

The end of the fifth book.

The A R G U M E N T of Book VI.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight describ'd: Satan and his powers retire under night: He calls a council, invents devilish engines, which in the second day's fight put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length pulling up mountains, overwhelm'd both the force and machines of Satan: Yet the tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserv'd the glory of that victory: He in the power of his Father coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

ALL night the dreadless angel, unpursu'd,
 Through heav'n's wide champain held his way;
 till morn,
 Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
 Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
 Within the mount of God, fast by his throne;
 Where light and darkness in perpetual round
 Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through
 Grateful vicissitude, like day and night; [heav'n
 Light issues forth, and at the other door
 Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour.
 To veil the heav'n, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here: And now went forth the morn,
 Such as in highest heav'n, array'd in gold
 Empyrean; from before her vanish'd night,
 Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain
 Cover'd with thick imbattled squadrons bright,
 Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery steeds
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
 War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found
 Already known what he for news had thought
 To have reported: Gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly pow'rs, who him receiv'd

With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one
 Return'd not lost: On to the sacred hill
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice
 From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard.

Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought:
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence; for this was all thy care
 To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse: The easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue
 By force, who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their King
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
 And thou in military prowess next,
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible, lead forth my armed saints,
 By thousands and by millions, rang'd for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms
 Fearless assault, and to the brow of heav'n
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide

His fiery chaos to receive their fall.

So spake the sov'reign voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command the powers militant,
'That stood for heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,
Under their god-like leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene: At last
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region stretch'd
In battalious aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded pow'rs of Satan hastening on
With furious expedition; for they ween'd

That self-same day, by fight, or by surprise,
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
 In the mid-way: Though strange to us it seem'd
 At first that Angel should with Angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great fire,
 Hymning th' eternal Father: But the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst exalted as a God
 Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
 Idol of majesty divine, inclos'd
 With flaming Cherubim and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval! and front to front
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length: Before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
 Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
 Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold;
 Abdiel that fight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty
 Remain not: Wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?

His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have try'd
 Unfound and false ; nor is it aught but just,
 That he who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor ; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
 Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
 Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention more
 Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd.

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
 The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue : Fool, not to think how vain
 Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms ;
 Who out of smallest things could, without end,
 Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly ; or with solitary hand
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,
 Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
 Thy legions under darkness : but thou seest
 All are not of thy train ; there be who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone
 Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all : My sect thou seest ; now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour

'Of my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
 From flight, seditious Angel, to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
 Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert, who while they feel
 Vigour divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest : This pause between
 (Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know ;
 At first I thought that liberty and heav'n
 To heav'nly souls had been all one ; but now
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministring sp'rits, train'd up in feast and song ;
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heav'n,
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.
 Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote :
 Unjustly thou depriv'st it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
 Or Nature ; God and Nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
 Against his worthier, as thine own serve thee,
 Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd ;
 Yet lewdly dar'st our ministring upbraid.

Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom ; let me serve
In heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd ;
Yet chains in hell, not realms, expect : Mean while
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept : Ten paces huge
He back recoil'd ; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstay'd ; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
'Thus foil'd their mightiest ; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Prefage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle : Whereat Michael bid sound
Th' Arch-angel trumpet ; through the vast of heav'n
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest : Nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in heav'n till now
Was never ; arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd ; dire was the noise
Of conflict ; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.

So under fiery cope together rush'd
Both battles main with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage : All heav'n
Refounded, and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her center shook. What wonder ? when
Millions of fierce encount'ring angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions : How much more of pow'r
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat ;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of heav'n high over-rul'd
And limited their might ; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion, led in fight, yet leader seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war : No thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argu'd fear ; each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory : Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread
That war and various, sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air ; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire : Long time in even scale
The battle hung ; till Satan, who that day

Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once ; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting ; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference : At his approach
The great Arch-angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflam'd first thus began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
'Though heaviest by just measure on thy self
And thy adherents : How hast thou disturb'd
Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion ? How hast thou instill'd
'Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now prov'd false ? But think not here
To trouble holy rest ; heav'n casts thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
'Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell,
'Thou and thy wicked crew ; there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,

Or some more sudden vengeance wing'd from God
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.

So spake the prince of angels ; to whom thus
The adversary. Nor think thou with wind
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
That thou should'st hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence ? err not that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we stile
The strife of glory ; which we mean to win,
Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell
Thou fablest ; here however to dwell free,
If not to reign : Mean while thy utmost force,
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have fought thee far and nigh.

They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
Unspeakable ; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Likens on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such height
Of Godlike pow'r ? for likest gods they seem'd,
Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.
Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles ; two broad suns their shields
Blaz'd opposite, while Expectation stood
In horror ; from each hand with speed retir'd,
Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion ; such as, to set forth

Great things by small, if nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition in mid sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
 Together both, with next to almighty arm
 Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of pow'r at once ; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention : But the sword
 Of Michael from the armoury of God
 Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge : It met
 The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer ; nor stay'd,
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring shar'd
 All his right side : Then Satan first knew pain,
 And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd ; so fore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Pass'd through him : But th' ethereal substance clos'd,
 Not long divisible ; and from the gash
 A stream of neet'rous humor issuing flow'd
 Sanguine, such as celestial sp'rits may bleed,
 And all his armour stain'd, ere while so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
 By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
 From off the files of war : There they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath

His confidence to equal God in pow'r.
 Yet soon he heal'd ; for sp'rits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die ;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air :
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
 All intellect, all sense ; and as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size,
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like deeds deserv'd
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
 And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king ; who him defy'd,
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heav'n
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous ; but anon
 Down cloven to the waste, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai,
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail,
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The athiest crew, but with redoubled blow
 Ariel and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.

I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth ; but those elect

Angels, contented with their fame in heav'n,
Seek not the praise of men : The other sort,
In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
Cancell'd from heav'n and sacred memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from truth divided and from just,
Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
And ignominy, yet to glory aspires,
Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame :
Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,
With many an inroad gor'd ; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder ; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming steeds ; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise th' inviolable saints,
In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd ;
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd
Not to have disobey'd ; in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd.
Now night her course began, and over heav'n

Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war :
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
 Victor and vanquish'd : On the foughen field
 Michael and his angels prevalent
 Incamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires : On th' other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd ; and void of rest,
 His potentates to council call'd by night ;
 And in the midst thus undismay'd began.

O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
 Not to be overpow'r'd, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone,
 Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory and renown ;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
 (And if one day, why not eternal days ?)
 What heav'n's Lord had pow'rfullest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so : Then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd,
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
 Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd ;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury ;
 Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy ; perhaps more valid arms,

Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none : If other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.

He sat ; and in th' assembly next upstood
 Nisroch, of principalities the prime ;
 As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havock hewn,
 And cloudy in aspect thus answ'ring spake.

Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods ; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpain'd, impassive ; from which evil
 Ruin must needs ensue ; for what avails
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest ? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
 But live content, which is the calmest life :
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd,
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright

Believ'ſt ſo main to our ſucceſs, I bring.
 Which of us who beholds the bright ſurface
 Of this ethereous mold whereon we ſtand,
 This continent of ſpacious heav'n, adorn'd
 With plant, fruit, flow'r ambroſial, gems and gold;
 Whoſe eye ſo ſuperficially ſurveyſ
 Theſe things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
 Of ſpiritous and fiery ſpume, till touch'd
 With heav'n's ray, and temper'd, they ſhoot forth
 So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light?
 Theſe in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which into hollow engines, long and round,
 Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
 Dilated and infuriate, ſhall ſend forth
 From far, with thund'ring noiſe, among our foes
 Such implements of miſchief, as ſhall daſh
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever ſtands
 Adverſe, that they ſhall fear we have diſarm'd
 The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long ſhall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
 Effect ſhall end our wiſh. Mean while revive;
 Abandon fear; to ſtrength and counſel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much leſs to be deſpair'd.

He ended, and his words their drooping chear
 Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
 To be th' inventor miſs'd; ſo eaſy it ſeem'd
 Once found, which yet unfound moſt would have
 Impoſſible. Yet haply of thy race [thought
 In future days, if malice ſhould abound,

Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With dev'lish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
 Th' originals of nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
 Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd:
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Intrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespied.

Now when fair morn orient in heav'n appear'd,
 Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
 The matin trumpet sung: In arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
 Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt: Him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in flow
 But firm battalion; back with speediest sail

Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd.

Arm warriors, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution and secure: Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling show'r,
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward move imbattled: When behold
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish engin'ry, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt; however witness heav'n,
Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part; ye who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch

What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended ; when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd :
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A tripple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd)
Brass, iron, stonny mold, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
Portending hollow truce : At each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire ; while we suspense
Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heav'n appear'd
From those deep throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Imbowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes ; which on the victor host
Levell'd with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands. Angel on Arch-angel roll'd ;
The sooner for their arms ; unarm'd they might
Have easily, as sp'rits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove ; but now
Foul dissipation follow'd and forc'd rout ;

Nor serv'd it to relax their ferried files.
What should they do ? if on they rush'd, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
And to their foes a laughter ; for in view
Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder : Back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.

O friends, why come not on these victors proud ?
Ere while they fierce were coming ; and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more ?) propounded terms
Of composition, strait they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance ; yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace : But I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamefome mood.
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many ; who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand ;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
'They show us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory ; eternal might

To match with their inventions they presum'd
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood
 A while in trouble : But they stood not long ;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the pow'r,
 Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heav'n
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
 Light as the ligh'tning glimpse they ran, they flew ;
 From their foundations loos'ning to and fro
 They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
 Up-lifting bore them in their hands : Amaze,
 Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd ;
 Till on those cursed engines triple-row
 They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep ;
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
 Main promontories flung, which in the air
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd ;
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though sp'rits of purest light,
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms

Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills uptore :
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hills
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade ;
 Infernal noise ; war seem'd a civil game
 To this uproar ; horrid confusion heap'd
 Upon confusion rose. And now all heav'n
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread ;
 Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heav'n secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd :
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
 To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All pow'r on him transferr'd : Whence to his Son,
 Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.

Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd,
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence, two days are past,
 Two days, as we compute the days of heav'n,
 Since Michael and his pow'rs went forth to tame
 These disobedient : Sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd ;
 For to themselves I left them ; and thou know'st,
 Equal in their creation they were form'd,
 Save what sin hath impair'd ; which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom ;
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found :

War wearied hath perform'd what war can do,
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd ; which makes
Wild work in heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine ;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In heav'n and hell thy pow'r above compare ;
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things, to be Heir and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then, thou mightiest in thy Father's might,
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh ;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all heav'n's bounds into the utter deep :
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed King.

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full ; he all his Father full express'd
Ineffably into his face receiv'd ;
And thus the filial Godhead answ'ring spake.

O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly Thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just : This I my glory account,

My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Sceptre and pow'r, thy giving, I assume,
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:
 But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Arm'd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,
 To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt,
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount
 Unfeigned Halleluiahs to thee I sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.

So said, he o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
 From the right hand of glory where he sat;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine, [sound
 Dawning through heav'n: Forth rush'd with whirlwind
 The chariot of Paternal Diety,
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
 By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
 Had wondrous; as with stars, their bodies all,
 And wings, were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a saphir throne, inlaid with pure

Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
 He in celestial panoply all arm'd
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended ; at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-wing'd ; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd ;
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd
 Of smoke, and bick'ring flame, and sparkles dire.
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
 He onward came, far off his coming shone ;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen :
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky, in saphir thron'd,
 Illustrious far and wide ; but by his own
 First seen : Then unexpected joy surpris'd,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd
 Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in heav'n ;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
 His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
 Under their head imbodied all in one.
 Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd ;
 At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
 Each to his place ; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious ; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.

This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd,
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heav'nly sp'rits could such perverseness dwell ?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent ?

They harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy; and aspiring to his height,
 Stood reimbattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake.

Stand still in bright array, ye Saints, here stand,
 Ye Angels arm'd, this day from battle rest;
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
 And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done
 Invincibly: But of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
 Nor multitude; stand only, and behold
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By me; not you, but me, they have despis'd,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, t' whom in heav'n supreme
 Kingdom, and pow'r, and glory appertains,
 Hath honour'd me, according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd;
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;

Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.

At once the Four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd

Plagues: They astonish'd all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.

Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.

Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant

Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven;
 The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
 Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursu'd
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 And crystal wall of heav'n; which op'ning wide,
 Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
 Into the wasteful deep: The monstrous sight
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urg'd them behind: Headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of heav'n; eternal wrath
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
 Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
 Nine days they fell: Confounded Chaos roar'd,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Incumber'd him with ruin: Hell at last
 Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburden'd heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
 Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.

Sole victor from th' expulsion of his foes
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd;
 To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright,
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,

Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion giv'n,
 Worthiest to reign : He celebrated rode
 Triumphant through mid heav'n, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
 On high ; who into glory him receiv'd,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

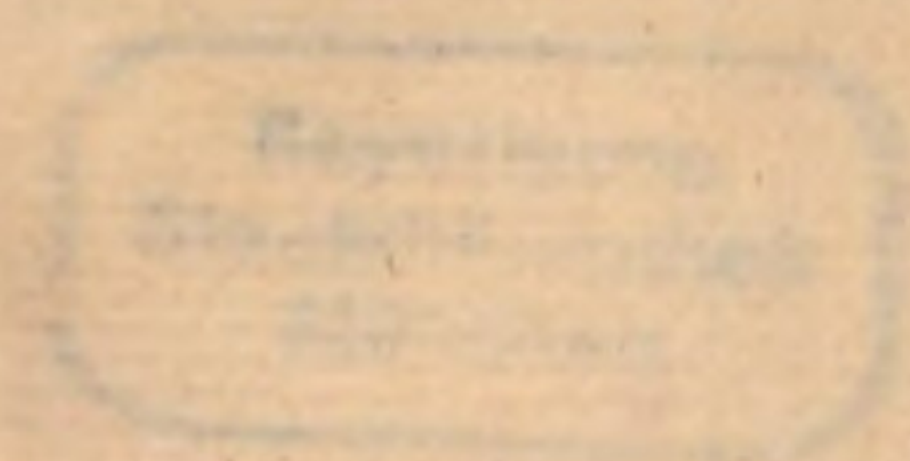
Thus measuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
 What might have else to human race been hid ;
 The discord which befel, and war in heav'n
 Among th' angelic pow'rs, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
 With Satan ; he who envies now thy state,
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that, with him
 Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery ;
 Which would be all his solace and revenge,
 As a despite done against the Most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
 But listen not to his temptations, warn
 Thy weaker ; let it profit thee to have heard
 By terrible example the reward
 Of disobedience ; firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell ; remember, and fear to transgress.

The end of the sixth book.

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 München

My dear Mr. Garrison, I have just received your letter of the 29th inst. and am glad to hear that you are still so active in the cause of the oppressed. I have been thinking much of late of the state of the world, and of the progress of the various reforms. I feel that we are living in a most interesting and exciting time, and that the future is full of promise for the good. I am sure that your efforts will be successful, and that the day will come when all men will be free and equal. I am, dear sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison

The Editor of the Boston Herald









Milton, John, 1608-1674

Paradise Lost A Poem, In Twelve Books

Bd.: 1

Edinburgh (1773)

P.o.angl. 284-1

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10748221-8